

Children trade basketballs for computers

By T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

They dropped the ball last week at the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center.

The basketball, that is. The volleyballs and softballs were also briefly retired while a dozen or so young people hovered over two computers inside the center.

Using Microsoft Clip Gallery, a computer art program, youngsters clicked through a wide assortment of images. They then chose an image, typed their names underneath and waited with great anticipation as a color printer shot out their creations.

They marched away proudly, grasping their 8-by-10 pieces of paper tightly, their names and pictures of animals, cars and plants boldly streaked across them.

The kids' excursion into the wondrous world of computers wouldn't have been possible two weeks ago, at least not at the MLK Center.

The computers were recently donated to the center by electronics retail giant Best Buy through a nationwide program that provides computer equipment to groups and organizations that will greatly benefit from it. The two computers are the first for the center. It joins just a handful of other recreation centers in the county that provide computer labs for the communities they serve.

"I can't think of a better center for these computers to go into,"

said Kerry Mowery, the city's district recreation supervisor. "I would like one day to see a computer lab at every recreation center."

The MLK Center's physical location aided it in nabbing the computers. The center is on Pittsburg Street, in the heart of the Kimberley Park community. Kimberley Park has recently been the beneficiary of a national grant awarded to the county branch of the N.C. Cooperative Extension Center, a joint statewide venture between N.C. State University and N.C. Agricultural and Technical State University, which was formed to bring fresh ideas to struggling communities.

The Cooperative Extension Center used the grant to start the CYF (Children, Youth and Families) Program in Kimberley Park. The community was chosen for CYF because of its proximity to schools and because of the MLK Center's accessibility to everyone in the community and extended operating hours.

The program has provided parenting classes and workshops for those in the community. It was through CYF and 4-H, another N.C. Cooperative Extension Center program, that the recreation center received the donated computers.

The CYF program will now provide computer classes for adults and children every Wednesday evening. A computer consultant from Modif Inc. has volunteered to lead the classes.

The computers will be used

mainly for word processing. As of yet, they do not have Internet or e-mail capabilities.

"They can come here and do their reports for school and maybe this will be a sign to get more computers in here," said Carolyn High of the N.C. Cooperative Extension Center.

The center's newly-formed computer lab is housed in a small, yet comfortable rectangular-shaped room adjacent to the center's library. The two computers are a start, the center's director said.

"I think this is about the best donation that we've received since I've been here (about 15 years)," Bill English said. In the past, companies and organizations have donated a variety of greatly-needed sports equipment, but the computers are something "different," English said.

He says he seriously doubts whether the dozens of youngsters who trek through the center every day will completely abandon the center's basketball court and play-



Photo by T. Kevin Walker
Kendra Davis, a N.C. Cooperative Extension Center employee, instructs a Kimberley Park youngster.

ground. The lab will be a popular attraction as well; English says he has no doubts about that. The center has another room available, about the same size as the lab, where English says he wants to add even more computers. His goal is to have "at least five or six" for the center.

Arson

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charged in the same criminal complaint brought in February against Ballinger with assisting him in the 1994 arson of the Concord Church of Christ in Boone County, Ind.

Last week, Puckett filed a petition to enter a plea of guilty to that charge. Lee said Puckett and Wood "have not been cleared" and the investigation of fires set by Ballinger continues.

"Someone who sets fire to a house of worship is not just attacking a building, they are attacking a community," Lee said, adding that the task force would continue operations "as long as needed."

The task force has maintained a 34 percent arrest rate in the fires it has investigated, which Johnson said is "more than double the nationwide arson arrest rate of 16 percent."

Ballinger has been in federal

custody since his arrest after suffering burns from a church fire he allegedly set in Ohio. Off-duty Ball State, Ind., Police Sgt. Steve Hiatt said he overheard paramedics describing Ballinger's suspicious burns and remembered Ballinger's name from a 1997 church fire investigation. He stopped by the hospital and questioned Ballinger, who was bandaged with severe burns to his face, chest, legs and hands.

Ballinger has been mostly unemployed since he settled back into his parents' rural home in 1990.

In 1994, parents complained he was recruiting teen-agers into a cult. At Ballinger's home, Daleville Police Sgt. Mark Brewer confiscated about 50 contracts signed in blood by teen-agers who agreed to give their souls to the devil and do "all types of evil" in exchange for wealth, power and sex.

Ballinger was not charged and successfully sued to get the contracts back, Brewer said.

Pit bull that bit boy voluntarily euthanized

By PAUL COLLINS
THE CHRONICLE

The dog that bit 6-year-old DeVanté Andre Horton was euthanized last week. DeVanté received about 20 staples in his head and 15 stitches in his left leg as a result of the April 7 dog attack.

Dennis Phillip Jackson, the owner of the dog, was summoned to a hearing April 13, to determine whether the dog was a danger to the public. But before the hearing, Jackson voluntarily agreed to have the dog (a pit bull mixed with Rottweiler) put to death.

"I think they realized the dog was certainly a problem," said Barbara Cassidy, Forsyth County's director of animal control.

"The attack was fairly significant; it wasn't just a nip," Cassidy said.

The dog owner's mother, Lydia Jackson, pulled the dog off the child during the attack and tried to restrain it, but the dog broke loose from her, Cassidy said.

A Winston-Salem police officer shot the dog in the leg when it charged the officer.

Cassidy said the dog "was trying to attack whoever was there." Dianne George, DeVanté's

grandmother, said April 9 that she thinks Lydia Jackson probably saved DeVanté's life and George was very grateful for that.

In an interview Friday, George expressed her feelings about the dog being euthanized.

"I'm very pleased with that," she said. "I do know he won't be able to attack anybody else."

DeVanté's mother, Monica Latrice Thomas, said Monday said she was relieved but sad.

"I'm a little happy and a little sad," she said. "I know it was somebody's pet. I'm happy my son is all right."

When a doctor took staples out of DeVanté's head April 14, there was bleeding, so DeVanté had to go back to the doctor again April 19 to make sure there was no infection, his mother said. He had missed 10 days of school since the attack.

Thomas said she had not told DeVanté about the dog being put to death. She said she wanted to be sure DeVanté could accept the news. "He was already traumatized," she said.

DeVanté was still sleeping

with his mother because he was frightened, his mother said.

He also was still experiencing pain from the dog bites.

"He's doing better," his mother said.

Dennis Phillip Jackson could not be reached for comment.

George said she still plans to lobby to have restrictions enacted requiring that dogs that have a reputation of being dangerous, such as pit bulls and Rottweilers, be allowed only for commercial use, such as commercial guard dogs, and not be allowed as pets.

The dog attack happened about 4:39 p.m. April 7 outside the Jackson home on Patterson Avenue less than 150 feet from DeVanté's home. Officer R.K. Cauty of the Winston-Salem Police Department said that a witness reported seeing two boys playing at the dog pen and that at one point the witness saw them kicking the dog pin and poking a stick in the gate. DeVanté and his 7-year-old brother, Jamón Antwaun Horton, denied that they were taunting the dog or poking sticks in the gate.

Second New Bethel to hold gospel festival

Special to THE CHRONICLE

Second New Bethel Baptist Church will sponsor its third annual East Winston Outdoor Gospel Festival on May 29, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Last year's festival was very successful, and the participation from area churches and the community was overwhelming! With your help, we are certain to repeat this phenomenon once again.

The time is quickly approaching. May 29 is right around the corner. Therefore, it is imperative that we hear from you as soon as possible to let us know your intentions for this year.

The East Winston Outdoor Gospel festival is a time when we fellowship in musical harmony to praise the Lord. It is also a time when we come together just for fun. Like last year, we will have: good food, area gospel choirs, professional health fair, black arts and crafts, balloons for the kids, corporate booths representing opportunities, carnival atmosphere and much, much more!

Second New Bethel Baptist Church is at 1900 New Walkertown Road, Winston-Salem. Phone: 722-0128. Fax: 766-5083.

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Physician On Call

What Is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

Q: What is carpal tunnel syndrome?
A: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is a condition in the hand and wrist characterized by numbness and pain, especially of the thumb and first two fingers.

Q: What causes CTS?
A: CTS is usually caused by repetitive motion activities such as typing, working on the computer or assembly work. After long hours performing the same motion, the wrist and hand may seem to fall asleep or become numb. Following the numbness, a pain may develop up the arm and into the neck and shoulder. Shaking or massaging may help, but eventually grip strength decreases and you may tend to drop things.

Q: Why does CTS happen?
A: To understand why CTS happens, picture the tendons and nerves in your arm. Nine tendons and the median nerve go through a tunnel made of a ligament connected to the wrist bones. When the ligament in the tunnel becomes inflamed or swollen, this puts pressure on the median nerve, resulting in CTS.

Q: Can I do anything to help prevent CTS?

- Keep your wrist in a straight position when working with your hands.
- Use your entire hand when grasping or lifting items.
- Minimize repetitive motion whenever possible.
- Avoid activities that subject your hands to strain and force.
- Practice conditioning exercises to strengthen hand and arm muscles.

If you are concerned about Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, please check with your physician for further recommendations.



John P. Card, MD

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